

1989 turned out to be a significant year in the history of our bridge club. On the 27<sup>th</sup> January 1971 we started playing bridge in the former clubrooms of the Taupo Golf Club. These premises were leased from the Golf Club but were able to be altered and renovate. Which we did with great enthusiasm!

The first task was to raise money so we began by asking members to purchase debentures and the response was excellent. These funds were helped by numerous raffles, stalls and functions. 1975 we were able to start on alterations. The roof was mended and painted. The ceiling was lowered to improve ventilation. The kitchen was re-sited into the ladies' locker room and the men's locker room incorporated into the main room. The later was painted and re-carpeted.

A large amount of these activities were achieved by working bees. Our members were not only endowed with financial expertise but practical talents as well. One and all had abundant enthusiasm to helping "the cause".

Perhaps an outstanding example of this was Melbourne Cup day. This had been started the year before by a group of our women members so successfully it was repeated in 1989. They organised a truly gourmet feast with "fun" bridge, prizes, raffles and of course, a big prize for the best hat. The whole day was pure magic and raised nearly \$900 for our funds. We bought a refrigerator and crockery and cutlery with this – no hiring anymore.

We were well on our way. The bridge was also getting more organised. Learners' classes well attended. Interesting, that way back then, we were complaining that we seemed to be training people for "social" bridge and not increasing our membership. We had our first computer and the grumbling about changing to written bidding was subsiding.

At the end of 1989 our main domestic concerns were replacing some wallpaper and getting new curtains.

No amount of painting and titivating could really disguise our club rooms from being old and draughty. Always a drain on our finances. But they had a very special atmosphere probably because they reflected so much effort and happy memories.

Why do I consider 1989 such a significant year? It was our last year in those clubrooms. On Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1990 an arsonist burnt down our premises including most of our records and photographs. We may have lost our home but as history shows, not our spirit!